872 to go home because Grandmother would have sent him back for a double
792 beating, so he hitched up his longyi, tied his shirt round his head and
861 swam across the stream. One of the huts on the other bank belonged to
a woman who had always been very fond of him because she believed
[775] him to be a reincarnation of her brother who had died in childhood;
Burmese Buddhists believe that one goes through many existences on this
earth, and sometimes children are born who have not yet forgotten their
previous existence by the time they can talk; they adopt habits uncannily
like those of the departed member who, the fond and grieving relatives
hope, has returned to them in the guise of this new child; they say "My
bed", "My clothes" to the possessions of the dead person, especially if
eggs are not included in their diet, the belief being that eggs cause them
to forget. When we were very young, the fame of a wonder child, who
could recite the most learned religious passages untaught, spread through-
out Burma, and my parents travelled to hear him; he had been a monk
in his past existence and could remember.

792 My father's case was no outstanding one like this; he had just re-
561 sembled the lady's brother in looks and gesture, and a few childish utter-
ances helped out by her belief had endeared my father to her as having
been *winsa* (come in and inhabited) by her brother. The good and fond
lady received the boy with open arms, agreed that he was getting too old
for the monastery, and promised to go over and plead with my grand-
mother to take him out now and hasten his initiation ceremony into the
priesthood. This was achieved and my father went back to his mother's
house and prepared for the *shinbyu* as the ceremony was called.

484 The manner of his exit from the monastery, however, had made
177 him restless. During the short period he was free, he could go where
● 874 he willed, and in this way he often met traders who came and went bet-
ween Ye and Tavoy, a seaport town about 100 miles away, to which
passenger and cargo ships from Moulmein made regular trips. One
day he was at the house on the opposite bank when a boy he used to know
as a toddler returned from Tavoy after a trip to Moulmein. This boy
could speak a few words of English. Moreover, he wore his hair in a
*boha-dauk* (a Westerner's crop) and seemed to think my father a jungle
boy. All the restlessness in my father flowed over then, because up to
now he had always felt himself clever and ahead of other boys. He
worried Grandmother to let him go to Moulmein and learn English, and
and get a job with the government which would bring them hundreds of
rupees each month. Other families who considered that Grandmother
had clever sons agreed that this would be a good idea; though none of
them had been to Moulmein and my father was still a boy, it would not
be so daring an adventure as it sounded, because there was some one

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among our relations in the village who had Anglo-Burman connections in Moulmein. These would put my father in school and look after him.

So after his shinbyu and his spell in the monastery, my father set off down the ye creek to catch a sailing boat of trader friends who, in their sailing ships called *kattu*, ventured as far as the Nicobar Islands and could sail to Moulmein in about seven days. His head was now cropped, and my grandmother had put a ruby ring on his finger; he was 16 years old, which was a very late age to start English schooling and pass it in time to get a good civil service job, but everyone at home thought he would do it easily for he had been the brightest boy in the monastery school.

285 437 they were made by friends. Ma Aye Myaing and Daw Aw Zar appear to specialize in the larger mats such as used for sleeping. Mat making appears to be an occupation which in ordinary times is unimportant but it is relied heavily upon in bad times.

461 562 561 [277] •874 [294] The children are put to work around the house and in processing the fish at an early age. Just recently U Myaing's eldest daughter left school to learn a trade. She left one month ago from the fourth standard, to learn cheroot rolling. In another month's time she will have learnt how. She does not have to pay any fees - neither is she paid for her help. She lives with her aunt (U Myaing's sister) and has her meals there. Near their house there is also an embroidery shop which is owned by her aunt. At night U Myaing's daughter is taught embroidery and sewing by her aunt. The owner of the cheroot rolling shop is not a relative, but the women who work there are aunts and grand-aunts of the girl. When she has learnt the trade, then she will be paid between two and three rupees a day on piece work basis.

463 363 512 At present (May 1951) U Myaing is working as a sweeper in the Rangoon Municipality on a monthly wage of Rs. 80/-. There is an overseer placed over him every day. U Myaing's main job is to keep one street in town clean. He leaves his house at six and arrives at the overseer's by half past six and there a roll-call is taken of about a hundred of them. At seven he begins on his street and stops at about half-eight to go to answer the roll-call (see below for rest of schedule ).. He has personal contact only with the overseer, the doctor and the WUNDAUK (official). All three of them go around the town to see if they work hard enough. The WUNDAUK also comes everyday to witness the roll-call. "If we do not do good work we shall be dismissed. Everything is in their hands. But they do so after two or three warnings. We do not possess any rights at all. Sometimes offenders are sent to other streets that require harder labour. "

U Myaing's street is located in Myeni-gon, and he has to clean the street of dirt as well as clean the drains on either side.

His daily schedule at present is as follows: He rises at 4, washes his face and cleans his teeth, says his prayers and then has plain tea which Ma Aye Myaing has prepared for him. At six he leaves

pagodas and those throughout the country are descendants of the pagoda slaves.

Beggars are rated below the pagoda slaves - but, because of the Buddhist merit associated with giving do well for themselves. The beggars live in communities on the outskirts of the town often in cemetaries. They are thought to exhume the dead to get the coins placed in the mouth of the deceased to ensure expenses on his journey to heaven. The wood of the coffin is believed to be used in constructing their huts. Professional undertakers or morticians are regarded with horror since they like the beggars, make their living from the dead. The functions of burial are performed gratis by the entire village. A story is currently going round the University dormitories telling of an immensely wealthy Burmese coffin maker in Rangoon who has offered riches to the young man who will marry his beautiful daughter. When the future seems blank the students' friend advises "Hey, why don't you go and marry the coffin maker's daughter?" It seems that the money would scarcely compensate for the social discrimation. The extent to which the occupation classes are rigid in marriage and other social exchanges is an interesting problem.

A young man is obliged to remain within the occupation class of his family or to rise to greater heights. He is advised at an early age to "be simple, aim high, and tell the truth." When children play at dacoits (thieves) of other "low class" games their parents object to their low aspirations and advise them to play nobles and ministers. One would feel justified in remaining idle rather than accept a position below that of his birth. It is better to accept a clerks job at a low salary than an artisans at a high salary. On the other hand those born into lower status occupation groups tend to be satisfied with their state as a condition of birth. In Rangoon, however, even the hawkers may have ambitions to achieve fame and fortune. The opportunities for social mobility is greater in the towns and cities but difinitely restricted in the villages.

Apprenticeship to trades begins at the age of 12 to 14 years, and usually lasts for several years. Ordinarily the youth is attached to the shop of a relative where he lives and is payed a subsistence wage while learning. The key to high positions lies in education in